2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

This chapter describes the Proposed Action, the No-Action Alternative, Reasonable Alternatives, and other Alternatives considered but omitted from further analysis.

2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

Reclamation would approve the annual exchange or transfer of up to 150,000 acre-feet of CVP, 215 or other water between eastside contractors and westside contractors through an internal exchange of SWP water by the KCWA (Figure 2-1). The Proposed Action would include the following steps:

- An eastside contractor (Transferor) would determine that water is available for exchange/transfer out of its division and would negotiate and execute a transfer agreement with a westside contractor (Transferee).
- The Transferee would negotiate and execute an exchange or transfer agreement for SWP water with KCWA.
- Reclamation would then convey the water from the eastside through the Friant-Kern Canal to its terminus in the KCWA, in Kern County, California (Figure 2-1).
- KCWA would deliver this water through its facilities to established groundwater recharge areas for future use by urban and agricultural customers. This water would remain within the current Friant CVP Place of Use boundary.
- The KCWA would deliver SWP water to the Transferee from the California Aqueduct.
- The Transferee would then put the water to beneficial use.

This approval process would be in effect for five years between March 2001 and February 2006.

Transfers and exchanges eligible for this approval would meet all of the following criteria:

- Provide water for agricultural lands irrigated within the last 3 years;
- Occur on a willing seller/willing buyer basis;
- Occur within a single water year;
- Use existing facilities and operations;
- Result in no change of land use;
- Bring no new native, untilled land into agricultural production;
- Result in no effect to federally listed species;

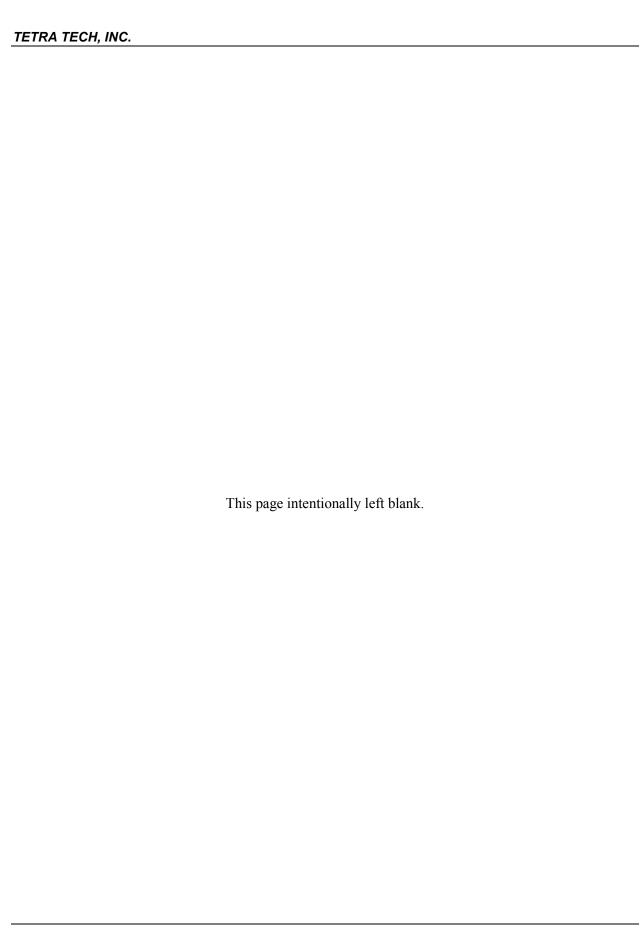
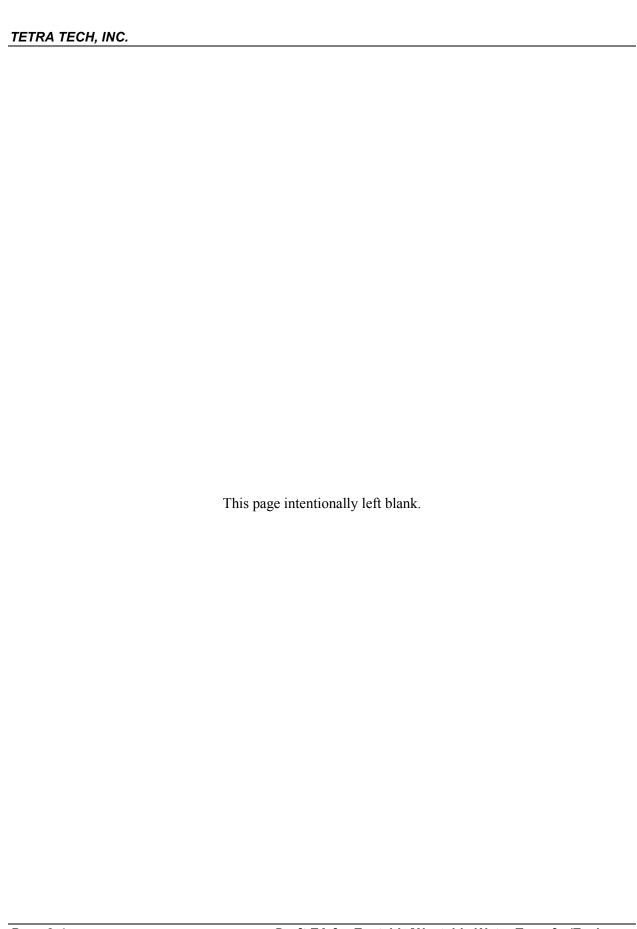


Figure 2-1 Project Area Map 8.5 x 11 Color



- Be monitored and annually reported to Reclamation to calculate the cumulative transfer activity authorized under this EA, including the quantity and location where the end use of water occurs; and
- Beneficial use of CVP water and SWP water must be consistent with the water rights under which the water was appropriated. All beneficial use must occur within the authorized place of use.
- Be in compliance with all federal, state, local, and tribal laws/requirements imposed for the protection of the environment and Indian Trust Assets.

2.2 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No-Action Alternative, Reclamation would continue to evaluate temporary transfers/exchanges of CVP water between eastside contractors and westside contractors through an internal exchange of SWP water with the KCWA. Transfers would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with separate environmental analysis and administrative review for each transfer.

2.3 REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

No other alternatives are considered to be reasonable.

2.4 OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT OMITTED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

2.4.1 Construct or Modify Water Transfer Facilities

This alternative would consist of constructing a canal or pipeline, or modifying existing water transfer facilities to allow exchanges/transfers between eastside and westside contractors without the internal exchange of SWP water by the KCWA. This option was removed from consideration due to expense and probable environmental impacts associated with construction.

2.4.2 Enlarge Storage Facilities Within the Friant Division

This alternative would consist of constructing new reservoirs, enlarging existing reservoirs, or establishing groundwater basins to store surplus water during wet years. In dry years, this stored water would supplement surface water and reduce the need to pump groundwater. This alternative was removed from consideration due to expense and probable environmental impacts associated with construction.

